THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There was general consensus on the need to frame a new police law for contemporary needs. However, police being a state subject, the State Governments were advised to devise their own approach while considering the Model Police Act drafted by Dr. Soli Sorabjee Committee, which had been constituted by the Central Government in September, 2005.

Confidence generation among witnesses

946. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the recent convictions in high-profile cases like Priyadarshani mattoo and Jessica Lal decided in November and December, 2006 by the Delhi High Court, the importance of witness statements in bringing the guilty to book has been the main determinant factor; and

(b) if so, whether Government, in consultation with the Judiciary, are launching any drive to build greater confidence in the mind of witnesses and provide them with enough reasons to make them not end up ruing their decision to assist the courts, and also there being no doubt in their mind about retribution if they do turn hostile?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (b) The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2006 which was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd August, 2006 has, *inter alia*, proposals to introduce measures to prevent the evil of witness turning hostile. It is proposed in the Bill to insert new sections 164B and 344A in the Code of Criminal procedure, 1973 to provide that the statements of all persons which appear to be material and essential for proper investigation of the case relating to offences punishable with death or imprisonment for ten years or more shall be recorded on oath by Magistrate who will also satisfy himself that such person is making the statement voluntarily and not under any inducement, threat or promise. Also, it has been proposed to enhance the punishment for perjury after the summary trial.